1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

TOPICS OF THE MEETINGS

623 The most important and delicate topic of discussion
651 at meetings is always the subject of taxes. These taxes are decreed by the T'u-ssu as a lump sum imposed on the entire village. The villagers have then to group themselves by wealth in five classes and to pay more or less taxes according to this classification. The classification of families is a very difficult and delicate problem. In the discussion everybody asserts that he is, and proves himself to be, the poorest man in the village, deserving to be put in the lowest classification. The tax imposed on the village is compared with the taxes on other villages, and the chief of the village is criticized for not having defended the interests of his village. These meetings also fix the date on which the taxes have to be ready either to be carried by the villagers in a group to the mansion of the T'u-ssu, or to be ready for the nobles who come to collect them. Illegal and oppressive exactions by the officials of the T'u-ssu and difficulties with the collecting nobles are discussed, and entrusted to the chief of the village for redress or for conciliation with the T'u-ssu.

623 Another important topic is the digging or repairing of
• 312 irrigation canals. The number of digging days required from each family is adjusted to the amount of land each family cultivates. Quarrels are patched up with families accused of having kept the water from the canal turned into their fields for longer than the allotted time. The proper time is calculated by the time taken to burn a certain number of incense sticks for the irrigation of a determined acreage of fields.

623 At these meetings the contributions of every family
651 are fixed for the expenses of keeping the village temple
794 in repair and payments to the shamans who perform the two important rites of spring and of protection against storms and hail, and of thanksgiving for the harvest.[1] An apportionment is also made of the liability of members for all kinds of corvées, or obligatory services, religious as well as administrative. The groups of youngsters must be ready day and night to stay in and even sleep in the temple in order to avert the danger of hail and storms in summer. Duties must be assigned also for taking care of the sacred animal of the village, and for preparing the performance of all kinds of religious rites carried out on behalf of the village. Villagers must also be designated for all kinds of corvée service at the mansion of the T'u-ssu.

622 The officials must also be prepared to deal with all
627 kinds of problems in the private lives of the villagers (except family vengeance feuds). If a villager has got himself into difficulties or is burdened with troubles not of his own making he goes to the chief of the village, presents to him a scarf of felicity and a bottle of wine, and invites him to iron out the problem. The chief

[1] The religious aspects of Monguor life will be discussed in a second volume, now being prepared for publication.

1; Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

LIMITS OF AUTHORITY OF THE VILLAGE OFFICIALS

621 While the village officials are expected to deal with all possible disturbances of the peace, there are limits to their authority. The commoners, being the subjects of the T'u-ssu, who merely delegates his powers to the officials whom he appoints, have the right to appeal to him. The appeal, however, can be made only after punishment has been inflicted, in view of the fact that the commoner is also subject to the village authorities. The form of appeal to the higher authority of the T'u-ssu, therefore, is not "the village authorities *intend to be* unjust to me," but "they *have been* unjust to me." The remedy, therefore, calls not merely for preventing the carrying out of a sentence wrongly imposed, but for punishing the lower authority for a mistake made and executed. This view of the working of legal machinery is not peculiarly Monguor; it is Chinese, and indeed found in many Asian societies.

The jurisdiction of the chief of the village is, therefore, limited in two directions. He is circumscribed by custom in his authority over the villagers, and subordinate to the T'u-ssu. On his triennial visit the T'u-ssu always inquires into the administration of the officials, the suits that have been brought before them, and the way in which they have dealt with them. The outlook on these matters of Monguor society as a whole seems to be rooted in the blunt fact that the commoners are descendants of subjected tribes which might have been exterminated by their conquerors, and for which the price of survival was to become the "possessions" of the victors. The ordinary commoner, with only a confused idea about the history of his condition, knows only that he is completely subject to his T'u-ssu, to be ruled according to the customs of the clan.

In most matters the interests of each village are confined to its own territory, the payment of its own taxes, the support of its own quota of soldiers, the providing of its share of the additional levies for marriages and funerals in the T'u-ssu's family, and for the investiture of the T'u-ssu. If for any reason a village feels that it has a complaint to make, it makes its petition at the yearly assembly, or at the time of the ceremony of the opening of the seal, when all the chiefs of villages are gathered around the T'u-ssu.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VILLAGES

621 •312 To the extent that villages have few affairs in common, it is easy to be good neighbors. The most frequent cause of trouble between villages is dependence on the same irrigation canal, because villages using the same canal are jointly responsible for its yearly maintenance and for emergency repairs after floods.

Most village irrigation canals tap streams running from the mountains to the Hsining River or the Yellow River. The canals are divided into sections. In a typical case, the take-off section from the mountain

621 stream must be kept in repair by all the people using the water of the canal throughout its length. If section 312 *B*, the middle section of the canal, is to be repaired, the people of section *A* are not concerned. The people of the villages along sections *B* and *C* must do all the work. If section *C* is damaged, the villagers of that section must do all the work alone. Yet there are times when most of the damage is along the lowest section, and the people, getting no help from their upstream neighbors, harbor resentment.

621 Each village is allotted a fixed number of days for the use of water for irrigation. In times of drought, villages 312 will open their outlets from the main canals at night when it is not their turn for water in order to steal 628 water from the section whose turn it is, pretending that the dams broke. It is not uncommon for fights to break out over water-stealing, giving rise to long-lasting and bitter feuds between villages. When there is trouble over water the chiefs and elders of villages not involved in the case are invited to act as arbiters. If the damage done is not too serious, a dinner is given by the offenders and apologies are made; but if the damage is too great, the offending village is required to pay part of the taxes due to the T'u-ssu from the plaintiff village. Even such a settlement, however, may become the beginning of a feud.

621 Minor causes of friction between villages are the stealing of sheaves from the autumn harvest by poor 628 people or, in the spring and summer, damage to the crops of one village by straying animals from another 778 village. The chiefs of the villages concerned patch up such petty troubles without need for arbitration. Every village raises a sacred animal, usually a Tibetan bull yak or a he-goat. These animals are allowed to roam freely and to trespass on fields, and nobody complains of the damage they cause to crops. After a few years, however, a bull begins to turn savage, and sometimes injures people. In 1914 the bull of the village of Narin ripped open the belly of a Monguor of Lungta, who was working in the fields. The village of Narin made apologies, indemnified the family, and killed the bull. The meat was offered to the village of the man who was killed, because the people of a village are not allowed to eat the meat of their own sacred animal. No further trouble followed from this incident.

628 There is a strict custom that it is not allowed to sing 834 lascivious songs inside a village. The young people of villages that are not friendly sometimes sing such songs 533 in order to tease their neighbors, and fights break out; but if the chiefs of both villages concerned punish the youngsters, there are no further consequences.

628 In summary, it may be said that there are few serious quarrels between villages, except those over canals and irrigation water; in regions where irrigation is not used, in the so-called "dry land," serious quarrels never break out between villages.

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4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

but from the landowner who, in case the tenant disappeared or became insolvent, was responsible for the tax. In this way the lamas who were landowners had to collect the official taxes from their tenants, and accompany the endless caravans of their tenants' donkeys carrying grain to the official granaries. Before the journey to the granary started, however, each tenant had to measure the grain in the presence of the lamas and with the measure supplied by the lamas, the capacity of which was greater than the official one; this enabled the lamas to set aside a valuable surplus over the vast amount of official taxes.

The properties of the lamaseries, consisting of extensive territories, contain a large part of waste and untilled land on which no taxes are imposed. The industrious intendants developed these properties by means of irrigation canals, and called in new farmers to till the new fields. The legal amount of taxes, however, has always remained the same as the initial amount, because the intendants, by means of collusion and bribery, easily succeed in gaining over the tax collectors. In this way the revenues of the intendancies are greatly increased, and they still receive surreptitiously a very large revenue. Moreover, they are able to store the surplus, which they can grind or sell when prices are highest.

HERDS

Sheep, cows, and horses constitute, for many intendancies, a source of revenue. Large herds are grazed in Kukunor or Mongolia where the pastures are larger, smaller herds in the country for local use. Mongol princes and Tibetan chiefs of tribes are always ready to help the monasteries. A contract is made with herdsmen by which the first calves, colts, and lambs belong to the owner, the second-born to the herdsman, and so on. Every three years a lama inspector of the intendancy examines the accounts of the herdsmen and settles with them the number of animals to be sold, and the herdsmen show the skins of the animals which died during the three-year period. If they cannot produce the skins of the dead animals it is assumed that they sold the animals and they must pay the owner of the herds.

OIL AND GRAIN MILLS

These mills are a large source of revenue. The monastery proper of Erh-ku-lung is owner of twenty-four oil and grain mills; the T'u-kuan himself has eighteen, Chang-chia nine. The mills are leased by Monguors or Chinese. The rent of oil mills is 300 pounds of oil for a season's use, besides which it must press the oil belonging to the monastery. The grain miller must grind the grain of the intendancy and at the New Year season give a pig weighing 120 pounds. Most of the oil which is not consumed in the kitchen in the preparation of food, or in the lamps in the temples and homes, is sent by raft to Lan-chou, the capital of the province.

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5:Schram M-5 (1911-1922)1961 AE9 Monguor AE9

is fighting must be fought, but always at the same time the tribes should be induced to surrender peacefully. The debates lasted for seven years and nothing was done (*Annals* of Hsining 20: 10*b*, 11*a*). Finally in 1530 the Tibetan tribes of T'ao and Ming Chou started plundering the country. The tribes had fled from Kokonor for fear of the Mongols. Their destitution was tragic. Commander Liu Wen-yu, protagonist of the third group, left with his army, but at the same time sent officials to induce the tribes to surrender, promising them help. Among them only twenty-one tribes decided to revolt, the Lung-po (Uighur) tribe being the leader of the group. The commander defeated two tribes, killed 360 rebels and then started peace talks. He succeeded, receiving the surrender of seventy or more tribes. He returned with the army. The regions of T'ao and Ming Chou were at peace.

The same year, while the tribes of T'ao and Ming Chou, situated south of the Yellow River, were pacified, the Tsantsa tribes, living on the northern bank of the Tatung River, plundered the region of Nienpei, but were defeated in the T'u-ku-hung valley. Splinter groups of Mongols raided Chengfan, and small groups of Kokonor brigands invaded Hsining and were pursued.

In 1534, amidst all these troubles, the Ming dynasty was still interested in education and instruction. More schools were built in several small fortresses, and in Hsining the Hall of the Faithful and Meritorious officials was constructed. On the stele erected inside the hall, we read among the names of the celebrated personalities those of four Monguor t'u-ssu: Li Nan-ko, Li Yin, the Duke of Huei-ming, his son, T'u-ssu Ch'eng Chih, and T'u-ssu Li Ch'ang, son of Li Yin (*Annals* of Hsining 35: 9*b*, 10*a*).

The situation grew worse every day and all of Huangchung was upset. Liu T'ien-ho, vice-president of the ministry of war, was sent in 1536 to direct the military operations in Kansu and Shensi. The third son of Dayan, Barsa Bolot, with his son, the Jinong had settled in Ordos. The turbulent Jinong made raids in Ninghsia, Liang and Kanchow. T'u-ssu Wang (*Annals* of Kansu 42: 40), Na (*Annals* of Kansu 42: 49), Hsin (*Annals* of Kansu 42: 54), were ordered to help stem the forays. T'u-ssu Hsin died on the field of battle. The Jinong invaded Hsining and hit a severe blow. T'u-ssu Lu and Ah (*Annals* of Kansu 42: 52) helped the commander beat the Jinong.

The next year the Kokonor brigands made a raid in Hsining and were severely beaten, twice, at the temple T'ieh-fu, 50 li north of the city.

General Liu T'ien-ho, having studied the situation of the country, ordered first the repair of the walls and towers of the eighteen existing small fortresses and villages and cities, and to start immediately with the building of seventeen new fortified villages. He promoted agriculture around the fortresses, dug irrigation

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canals, helped the people with grain and oxen, etc. He built the two large cities of Pa-yien-jung and San-ch'uan, south of Nienpei, and established there two strong garrisons, in order to control the whole region north of the Yellow River, reaching from the south of Hsining to Nienpei (*Annals* of Kansu 24: 18; 23: 16). At that time the only fortified villages were near the mansions of the t'u-ssu, where in time of troubles the people found shelter with their cattle and helped to defend the fortress, and from which they attacked and pursued brigands. Only near these fortresses were living and farming possible. No wonder that the helpless scattered tribes incessantly revolted, plundered on their own account, or joined the invaders after having been plundered.

In 1537 groups of Ordos brigands raided the fortress of Cheng-ch'iang-I, situated between Liangchow and Lanchow. T'u-ssu Yeh defended the fortress heroically and died in the battle. The people esteemed his brave conduct and erected a stele in commemoration inside the village.

In 1541 the Jinong from Ordos raided Hsia-ch'uan-ku in Huangchung; a crushing defeat was administered to him by General Liu T'ien-ho in Ho-shuei-wan. His son Chin-shao was killed in the battle. T'u-ssu Lu, Li (*Annals* of Kansu 42: 38), Wang (*Annals* of Kansu 42: 40), Ch'i (*Annals* of Kansu 42: 45) participated in the action. Groups belonging to the Tsa tsa tribes of Huangchung plundered San-ch'uan and were chased by T'u-ssu Ch'i (*Annals* of Kansu 42: 45), and Li (*Annals* of Kansu 42: 38).

In 1543 the turbulent Jinong, leading a strong army, arrived at Kokonor, where he defeated I-pu-la, and captured half of his followers. I-pu-la fled to Mongolia plundering the Liangchow country on his way back. The Jinong was the grandson of Dayan and had a score to settle with I-pu-la, who, seceding with his tribes, had offended his grandfather Dayan. I-pu-la had raided and plundered Huangchung, had scattered or subdued and ruined the Tibetan tribes of Kokonor during thirty-four years (*Annals* of Hsining 31: 15*b*; 20: 12*a*). Pu-erh-hai, a Mongol chieftain who had joined I-pu-la in 1525, had already abandoned I-pu-la, and had hidden in the mountains to avoid the Jinong. Previously he had manifested his intention to submit to China and was better disposed toward the Tibetans. Many tribes returned to Kokonor hoping to enjoy a precarious peace for some years (*Annals* of Hsining 20: 12*b*). The same year T'u-ssu Lu was ordered to lead his troops to Tatung in Shansi province to help chase the invading Mongols.

In 1546 the emperor ordered the officials to erect an Honorific Arch glorifying the merits of T'u-ssu Lu.

Until 1549 the students in Hsining had been unable to pass the literary examination and acquire titles. This year, on account of the new regulations, diplomas were granted in Hsining.

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Peking, and the emperor agreed. Ping-tu forced the tribes to build a road to Wu-ssu-tsang in order to meet the lama. The entire Szechwan province was upset for fear of invasion by the savage Kokonor brigands. The governor wrote Altan to order his sons to desist from plundering the country. Altan answered that the only reason for the behavior of his sons was the lack of any markets where they could fill their needs. In 1574 markets were opened for Pin-tu and Ping-tu and the emperor granted to the temple of Kokonor the name Yin-hua-sse and the title of vice-commander to Ping-tu. However, the sons and cousins and nephews of Altan plundered as before. Again the officials asked Altan to reprimand them. Altan arrived with his army feigning to meet the lama; however he had an axe to grind with Oirats, his old foes. Coming back, he asked the governor to allow all the Mongol chieftains to attend a meeting with the lama in Kokonor. The Tibetans, taken with panic at the sight of the demonstration of power and magnificence, fled in all directions. Altan returned to the north (1577) but Ho-lo-ch'ih and Yung-chao-pu, his nephew and cousin, and others refused to leave Kokonor, and Ping-tu started plundering the Tibetans again. The officials immediately asked the emperor to close the markets. Altan reprimanded his son and urged him to return the stolen people and cattle. However, Ho-lo-ch'ih continued looting (*Annals* of Hsining 20: 13, 14).[84]

In 1579 the governor of Hsining was engaged in developing agriculture in Huangchung. He gathered the destitute people who had fled with fear of the Mongol brigands, located them in villages, provided them with grain and oxen, dug irrigation canals, etc. In each village he opened a school. He gathered more than 100,000 families, and more uncultivated land was tilled. When Altan left the country in 1577 he had asked him to leave peacefully and to protect the country against more raids by his people (*Annals* of Hsining 25: 20).

Ha-tsa, a Tibetan tribe of Kokonor, raided the western valley of Hsining in 1580, but was repelled. Two

[84] René Grousset, *Empire des Steppes*, 592, Paris, Payot: The Ordos Mongols started professing the lamaism of the Yellow Church from 1566 on. The *jinong* Khutukh Setsen Hung-t'ai-chi of the Uchin banner, coming back from an expedition in Tibet in 1566, had invited lamas to accompany him to Ordos and convert the Mongols to lamaism. The fervent *jinong* succeeded in converting his grand-uncle Altan who at that time was in the heyday of his power (1576). Altan and his grand-nephew invited the chief of the Yellow Church, the great lama bSod-nams rgya-mtso to come to Kokonor. The Mongols met him magnificently and opened with him an official convention at which was laid the foundation of the Yellow Church among the Mongols (1577), and Altan honored the great lama with the title of Dalai Lama, which title is still borne at present by his successors. The Dalai Lama, returning to Lhasa, appointed the Living Buddha Dongkur Manjucri in Kukuhoto the residence of Altan. The Dalai Lama left Lhasa again to travel to Ordos in 1586 for the performance of the cremation ceremonies of Altan who had died in 1583.

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